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ANALYSIS BRANCH

DATE: 7/17/70

FROM : Amembassy GUATEMALA

SUBJECT : INTERNAL SECURITY: Monthly Report of Incidents, June 1970

REF :

SUMMARY: The torture-murder of a San Carlos University instructor and the varying forms the reaction to his death took in the University community provided the major element of the internal security picture for the month of June. The general level of politically-related violence in the country remained unchanged from the previous month, a slight decline in violent incidents in Guatemala City being matched with an increase in the countryside, especially in the Department of San Marcos. The lull in spectacular acts of urban terrorism carried through the month, though the general apprehension and tenseness increased as inauguration day approached.

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1. The murder of Justo Rufino CABRERA Guzman, a part-time instructor in the Faculty of Economics at San Carlos University, set off a chain of reactions which extended through the month of June. Cabrera's tortured body was found a few yards from that of Antolin CARACUN Paz outside of Guatemala City on June 6. Though he was a relatively unknown professor, Cabrera's death struck a sensitive nerve in a University community already concerned about violence and more than a little apprehensive about their prospects under the fast approaching regime of President Arana. The University's Superior Council (its highest governing body) spoke out in a generally moderate tone, and formed the National Front Against Violence and In Defense of Human Rights, which it plans to develop into a wide-based organization to express the public's opposition to violence. The radical leadership of the Association of University Students (AEU) took a different approach which was manifested by temperate public statements which alienated the majority of University students. Faced with widespread apathy the AEU first postponed and then cancelled a protest march that had been scheduled for June 25. The

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failure of the radicals was in part due to the intelligent response of more moderate Guatemalans, including the government and President-elect Arana (See A-151).

2. The murder of a well-known businessman on June 7 provided one of the most bizarre acts of senseless violence in recent memory. Jose Manuel VILLAVERDA Vasquez, a successful druggist, was shot in his pickup truck at a model airplane field in Guatemala City. According to varying press reports, Villaverde was murdered by a group of armed men when he refused to get out of his truck and hand over his model airplane apparatus. The well-armed assailants had already stolen seven radio control units from those at the field. According to one press report, the assailants identified themselves as FAR members, upbraided the victims for playing with toys while their countrymen starved and ordered them to leave the country within eight days. There have been no reports of violence directed against any of those present since that time, but unconfirmed reports indicate that a number of the individuals did leave the country in the face of the threat. The theft of the radio receivers concerned GOG security forces who feared they would be used to detonate bombs. A newspaper reporter and a Costa Rican employee of FAO whose cars were stolen and used by the murderers, later received threats for having reported the theft of their autos.

3. A Guatemalan police officer was shot to death in downtown Guatemala City on June 24. As usual, press reports of his death vary, but the most likely account holds that he was spotted entering a large store downtown on a routine assignment by two young men who were there arranging for the purchase of a car. The two young men opened fire killing the officer and escaped through the crowded downtown streets. One press report identified one of the youths as Juan Jose AREVALO Bocalléti who had been picked up by the police in early April and charged with possession of a code book and some munitions.

4. A wealthy Salvadoran businessman who is a longtime resident of Guatemala was kidnapped on June 3. At first the family of Abraham FARACH Dada denied that he had been taken at all, as is common in such cases. Upon his release, the family alleged that he had indeed been kidnapped but the kidnappers had made a mistake, realized it and released him without payment of ransom. Press speculation put his ransom figure at somewhere between 50,000 and 200,000 Quetzales.

5. On the evening of June 19 a private policeman standing duty at a Guatemala City shopping center was murdered by two male youths who then made their escape. Apprehended near the scene of the crime was Garmen LANDA Castaneda, sister of the two Landa Castaneda brothers who are believed to have been involved in the murder of Ambassador Mein [REDACTED]. The girl appeared to be drugged when arrested.

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6. Other events of political violence in Guatemala City included a bomb thrown at the house of retired Col. Adolfo BARILLAS Murgia on the evening of June 5. He had reported the theft of his car which was used in a machinegunning attempt on the car of a police official, Ignacio PINTO, a week before. A note found at the scene of the bombing reportedly read: "This for having denounced the use of your car....FAR". Barillas' house is only a few yards from that of Villaverde who was murdered the following day, but there is no confirmation that the two crimes were related. On June 26 a PGT propaganda bomb exploded in the plaza in front of the city hall scattering leaflets but causing no damage. Nineteen year old Ricardo PINTO Diaz was fatally wounded when a grenade he was handling exploded in his rented room on June 19. The press assumed that he was a member of a guerrilla group.

7. Rumors of guerrilla attempts to kidnap children circulated widely through the city and other areas of the country during the month forcing the FAR to issue a statement denying any such intention. The widespread fear was an indication that the average Guatemalan does not feel comfortably divorced from the violence in his society.

8. Outside of the capital city the most violent area of the country was the Department of San Marcos. That Department's high level of violence in March diminished in April and May but rose again in June. Twelve murders of probable political motivation were reported. On June 3, four men in Pajapita were murdered. Three were identified as having received death threats previously. The press accounts did not indicate from what political extreme the threats had come. The fourth was found floating in a river and was unidentifiable. On June 9 three armed men interrupted a mourning service in a home in El Tumbler, San Marcos and shot down a 24 year old youth. Other murders were reported in Pajapita on the 12th and 13th. A 23 year old man was shot in his home by three armed men in Caterina on the 16th. An unidentified body with signs of torture was found in Nuevo San Carlos on June 23. According to the press, FAR literature was found at the scene of the crime. Another body with five bullets was found on the 28th in the Nuevo Progreso district of the same department. On the 27th a group of fifteen men reportedly killed Francisco BONILLA Rodas, a rancher and PID party director in the area. An MLN activist had 14 9mm bullets in him when his body was found on the 29th in Catehina, San Marcos. The parties of the Right also suffered in other areas of the countryside. Three Indian directors of the PID were taken from their homes in San Pedro Pinula, Jalapa on June 15 and summarily executed.

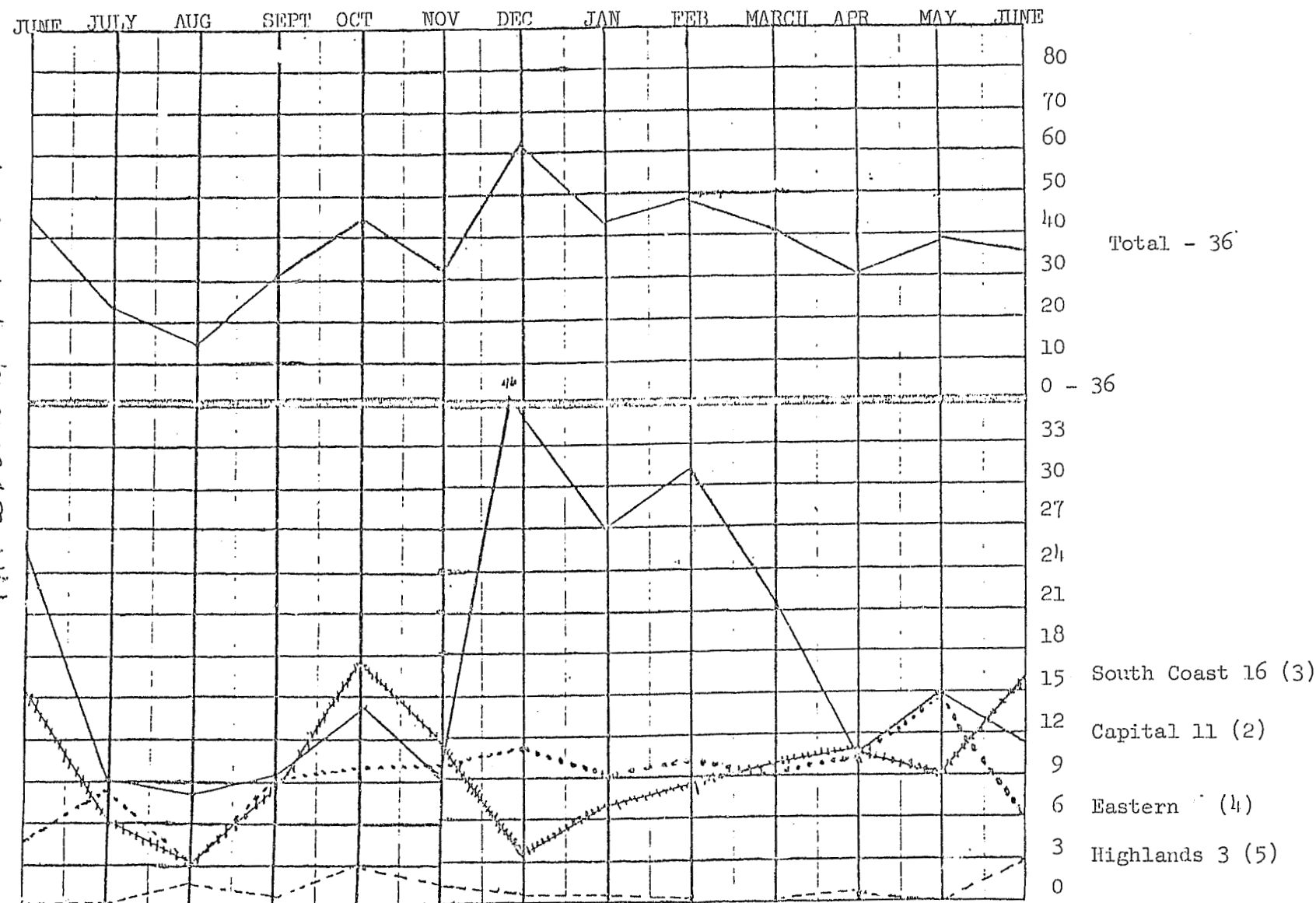
9. Reports of threats from terrorist groups of the right and left continued to appear in the press during the month. The "Ojo por Ojo" or individuals using that group's name had reportedly threatened a teacher in Totonicapan. During the early heated days in the University after the murder of Cabrera, one newspaper reported that forty University

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MONTHLY FREQUENCY OF TERRORIST RELATED INCIDENTS BY REGION (1) JUNE 1969 - JUNE 1970



1. For purposes of this graph, acts of violence include shootings, bombings, and assassinated bodies.
2. Capital Area: Sacatepequez, Guatemala
3. South Coast: San Marcos, Quezaltenango, Retalhuleu, Suchitepequez, Escuintla, Santa Rosa
4. Eastern Region: Jutiapa, El Progreso, Jalapa, Zacapa, Chiquimula, Izabal
5. Highlands: Totonicapan, Chimaltenango, Huehuetenango, El Quiche, Baja Verapaz, Solola

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